

Message Text

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44

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

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R 091445Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7179

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FOLLOWING SENT ACTION AMEMBASSY BRASILIA. INFO SAO PAULO
FROM RIO DE JANEIRO 08 JAN 74 REPEATED FOR YOUR INFO.

QTE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE RIO DE JANEIRO 0061

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, BR

SUBJECT: RESIDENT CENSOR WITHDRAWN FROM O ESTADO DE SAO PAULO

1. ACCORDING TO MARIO CUNHA, RIO EDITOR FOR O ESTADO DE SAO PAULO,
BEGINNING JANUARY 4, 1975, THE RESIDENT CENSOR AT O ESTADO
HAS BEEN WITHDRAWN BY ORDER OF JUSTICE MINISTER FALCAO.
CENSORSHIP IS NOW BEING DONE BY TELEPHONE. PRINCIPAL FORBIDDEN
ITEMS RELATE TO
NATIONAL SECURITY (E.G. BANK ROBBERIES, POLITICAL CRIMES
AND TORTURE). CUNHA SAYS THAT JULIO DE MESQUITA NETO
TALKED BY TELEPHONE ON JANUARY 7 WITH MINISTER OF JUSTICE
ARMANDO FALCAO AND WILL TALK AGAIN ON JANUARY 8 WITH
VIEW TO PERSUADING THE GOVERNMENT TO PROVIDE O ESTADO
WITH A WRITTEN LIST OF FORBIDDEN ITEMS. MESQUITA REPORTEDLY
BELIEVES THAT CENSORSHIP BY TELEPHONE IS UNDESIRABLE,
BOTH BECAUSE IT OFFERS OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE GOVERNMENT
TO MANUFACTURE PROVOCATIONS BY CLAIMING THAT IT
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TELEPHONED ABOUT A CERTAIN SUBJECT WHEN IN FACT IT

DID NOT, AND ALSO BECAUSE TELEPHONE CENSORSHIP AMOUNTS TO SELF CENSORSHIP WHICH MESQUITA REPORTEDLY WILL NOT ACCEPT. MESQUITA REPORTEDLY IS OPTIMISTIC THAT A REASONABLE AGREEMENT CAN BE WORKED OUT.

2. ACCORDING TO CUNHA, O ESTADO BEGAN DISCUSSING THE POSSIBILITY OF REMOVING ITS RESIDENT CENSOR WITH GOLBERY, NOW CHIEF OF THE PRESIDENT'S CIVILIAN HOUSEHOLD, BEFORE PRESIDENT GEISEL TOOK OFFICE. AFTER GEISEL BECAME PRESIDENT THE DISCUSSIONS BECAME MORE SERIOUS AND THE INTERLOCUTOR FOR THE GOVERNMENT BECAME JUSTICE MINISTER FALCAO. DURING THE LAST WEEK OF DECEMBER, 1974, MESQUITA REPORTEDLY SENT A MESSAGE TO FALCAO THROUGH O ESTADO'S RIO OFFICE TO THE EFFECT THAT IF THE GOVERNMENT WAS REALLY SERIOUS ABOUT REMOVING THE RESIDENT CENSORS, IT DO SO BEFORE THE PAPER'S ONE HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY. OTHERWISE, HE INTENDED NOT TO PUBLISH O ESTADO ON JANUARY 4, 1974, THE DATE OF THE CENTENARY OF ITS FOUNDING. IN EARLY JANUARY FALCAO REPORTEDLY INFORMED MESQUITA THAT THE CENSOR'S LAST DAY AT O ESTADO WOULD BE JANUARY 3.

3. COMMENT. THE WITHDRAWAL OF O ESTADO'S RESIDENT CENSORS HAS BEEN PREDICTED FOR SOME TIME, ESPECIALLY BY OTHER NEWSPAPER EDITORS, WHO ADMIRINGLY NOTED THAT, BY PRINTING PORTIONS OF OS LUSIADAS IN THE SPACES VACATED BY CENSORED ARTICLES, O ESTADO STRENGTHENED ITS INDEPENDENT IMAGE AND INCREASED ITS CIRCULATION. IN ANY EVENT, THIS GOVERNMENT ACTION REPRESENTS ONE MORE STEP IN FULFILLING ITS COMMITMENT TOWARD GRADUAL DISTENCAO AND ELIMINATES VISIBLE EVIDENCE OF CENSORSHIP OF THE BRASILIAN PRESS. FURTHER, IT ALSO WEAKENS ONE OF THE ISSUES (PRESS CENSORSHIP) WHICH PROMINENT MDB LEADERS HAVE REPEATEDLY OPPOSED, BOTH DURING AND SINCE THE NOVEMBER 15, 1974 CONGRESSIONAL ELECTIONS. CUNHA CLAIMED THAT GOLBERY IS PRIMARILY RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS DECISION. HE OBSERVED THAT PRESIDENT GEISEL WAS NOT PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN O ESTADO CENSORSHIP PROBLEM BOTH BECAUSE HE DOES NOT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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OFTEN DEAL WITH OR UNDERSTAND THE PRESS. MILLER UNQTEGM JOHNSON

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Message Attributes

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